



# State Representative Dave Quall

## 40th District

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## Principal of the Year

Keith Rittel's ability to inspire not only raised the spirits of his Anacortes High School students, it also raised their test scores.

Rittel who has worked for 15 years in Anacortes schools, including seven as principal, was named the 2004 Washington State Principal of the Year. His pioneering program helped substantially boost math, reading, and writing scores for Anacortes 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and has become a model for other school districts. I was proud to sponsor House Resolution 4705 in March to honor Mr. Rittel for his commitment to his students and to credit the contributions of high school principals across Washington.



Photo courtesy of Anacortes American

*Anacortes High School Principal Keith Rittel was named 2004 High School Principal of the Year for his work to help students raise test scores*

## Representative Dave Quall

# A Report to the 40th District



## Education Issues – My Top Priority

As Chair of the House Education Committee, I have had the responsibility of crafting legislation that will refine the education reform policies begun in 1993. We have made great strides toward our goal of a quality education for every child in Washington. The foundation of education reform is the notion that a high school diploma will now ensure that every student who walks across the stage has met the highly demanding standards in reading, writing and math that we have set. My grandson, Ethan, now in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, will be part of the Class of '08 that will be the first to demonstrate their mastery of these standards. I am confident that they will succeed.

This was a historic year for education policy in Washington. Working together in a bipartisan effort, House and Senate members and the Governor's office developed a package of bills that will make a major impact on education reform.

- **Adjustments to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade WASL that help students meet tough high school graduation requirements** taking effect in 2008. I consider this the biggest piece of education legislation in the last 10 years. It has the support of teachers, administrators, PTA and other education groups. The underlying principal is fairness to students and teachers. We want every child to have the opportunity to learn and receive adequate preparation for the demanding world that awaits them. In 2008, a high school diploma will mean that the student has mastered our state's high standards. To demonstrate this mastery, students will be allowed multiple retakes of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade WASL. Many very bright students do not

do well with standardized tests, so we are developing alternative methods to assess their abilities. Another important component is an "academic growth chart" for every student. With this tool, teachers, students and parents will be able to evaluate their progress. (HB 2195)



- **Strengthen the Learning Assistance Program (LAP)** so that schools who are making progress with struggling students are not penalized by a loss of funding. (SB 5877)
- **Boost school budgets by expanding school district levy capacity** where local voters have given support. (SB 6211)
- **Charter schools in Washington will soon be a reality.** Working in a bipartisan effort, we passed legislation to create a limited number of public charter schools in Washington. Our bill targets low-performing schools and struggling students. As the 40<sup>th</sup> state to adopt charter schools, this bill is the most targeted in the nation. Charter schools are public schools that are created by teachers, parents or community leaders to provide innovative, high-quality schools aimed at helping struggling students succeed. Charter schools are designed to benefit

tough-to-educate students and to close the achievement gap, so all students meet the high educational standards of our state. I have visited charter schools across the country that are raising student achievement in the middle of some America's toughest neighborhoods. The positive results for kids are inspiring. Struggling students become success stories. Learning and achievement become reality for kids who were losing hope. I want that experience for our children in Washington state. (HB 2295)

## Higher Education

State business leaders have called higher education the "fuel" in our economic engine. Strong research universities are a critical component in our efforts to be competitive. In Washington, we are blessed with two nationally recognized research universities along with four highly respected regional universities. Additionally, we have a network of excellent community colleges and technical colleges serving students in our local communities.

## This year we:

- Approved \$7.1 million for new enrollments for students pursuing health care, high-tech, and other high-demand degrees.
- Approved \$10 million for colleges and universities to expand enrollment
- Approved \$6.8 million in financial aid available to qualifying students.
- Invested \$117 million in improvements to higher education facilities.

More funding for our four-year schools, including WWU, will increase enrollments in high-demand fields such as health care, biotechnology, and high-tech degree programs. We also provided more financial assistance for students whose families cannot afford tuition without help.

We set aside more than \$14 million for a new Welding/Auto Collision Center at Bellingham Technical College. Other funding pays to remove asbestos and create new classrooms for up to 350 students in WWU's 37-year-old Bond Hall. (HB 2589)



## Recreation tax ended

*Kids can stay in the swing of sports thanks to the passage of a targeted tax relief bill. Local sports enthusiasts went to bat for kids this year so learning athletes can accept donated equipment or facility use without paying taxes. Larry Otos, Mt. Vernon Parks and Recreation Director, and others helped end the tax by supporting the bill that helps keep local education and nonprofit recreation programs alive. (SB 6115)*

## Protecting Family Wage Jobs

**We preserved aluminum industry jobs** with a short-term tax break to aluminum smelters. The Intalco plant in Ferndale and a plant in Wenatchee are the last two functioning smelters in Washington. These tax incentives will end Dec. 31, 2006, when energy rates are expected to drop. (SB 6304)

## Agriculture and Ecology

I also serve on the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee which is important for the vitality of our area, both for farmers and recreational users. Agriculture is the heart and soul of our regional economy. In order to maintain our quality of life, we must have a strong and viable farm community.

## I supported a number of important bills such as:

- **Promoting Washington State Agriculture** by strengthening the "Heart of Washington" program. (HB2366)
- **Preserving trails and off-road recreation areas** was the result of a good bill that redistributes funds to the Non-Highway Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Program. More anglers, campers, hunters and other outdoors lovers will see the benefit. Roughly \$5 million will go to improve hiking, biking, and horse trails, and other recreation improvements. (HB 2489)
- **Last year I worked with Skagit County farmers**, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, the Audobon Society and other groups to develop legislation to protect the ability of farmers to provide adequate drainage for their land. This bill preserves the necessary infrastructure for long term use of agricultural land. In order to protect farmland from development, we must preserve farming as a viable business enterprise. It is important to note that this is consistent with good environmental policy and preservation of fish habitat. (HB 1418)



## House pages

Pages have served in the House of Representatives since 1891, providing indispensable assistance to legislators. Four high school students joined me in Olympia this year to get a weeklong working knowledge of our state government. They are Steven Wilkerson, Randy Rodriguez, Miriam Witt and Allison Hamburg, all of Mount Vernon High School.

Students between the ages of 14 and 17 can apply for the page program.

Find out more about House pages on the Web —

**<http://www.leg.wa.gov/house/hadm/pageprog.htm>**

Miriam Witt (right) and Allison Hamburg, 9th grade students at Mount Vernon High School, served as House pages during the 2004 Session. Miriam is Rep. Quall's granddaughter.